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Occupational Employment and Wages in El Paso, May 2014

Workers in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area had an average (mean) hourly wage of \$17.51 in May 2014, about 23 percent below the nationwide average of \$22.71, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics. Regional Commissioner Stanley W. Suchman noted that, after testing for statistical significance, wages in the local area were lower than their respective national averages in 18 of the 22 major occupational groups, including computer and mathematical; construction and extraction; and personal care and service. Local wages in four occupational groups were not statistically different from their respective national averages: protective service; legal; community and social service; and architecture and engineering.

When compared to the nationwide distribution, El Paso employment was more highly concentrated in 6 of the 22 occupational groups including office and administrative support; personal care and service; and protective service. Conversely, 11 groups had employment shares significantly below their national representation, including management; business and financial operations; and computer and mathematical. (See [table A](#) and [box note](#) at end of release.)

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	El Paso		United States	El Paso		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Total, all occupations.....	100.0%	100.0%		\$22.71	\$17.51	*	-23
Management.....	5.0	3.2	*	54.08	47.37	*	-12
Business and financial operations.....	5.1	3.4	*	34.81	28.65	*	-18
Computer and mathematical.....	2.8	1.5	*	40.37	27.85	*	-31
Architecture and engineering.....	1.8	0.9	*	39.19	37.67		-4
Life, physical, and social science.....	0.8	0.4	*	33.69	26.76	*	-21
Community and social service.....	1.4	1.3		21.79	21.43		-2
Legal.....	0.8	0.6	*	48.61	48.36		-1
Education, training, and library.....	6.2	7.5	*	25.10	22.37	*	-11
Arts, design, entertainment, sports, and media.....	1.3	0.8	*	26.82	20.25	*	-24
Healthcare practitioners and technical.....	5.8	5.3	*	36.54	32.86	*	-10
Healthcare support.....	2.9	3.1		13.86	11.96	*	-14
Protective service.....	2.4	3.7	*	21.14	21.55		2
Food preparation and serving related.....	9.1	10.4	*	10.57	9.21	*	-13
Building and grounds cleaning and maintenance.....	3.2	3.2		12.68	9.95	*	-22
Personal care and service.....	3.1	4.4	*	12.01	8.88	*	-26
Sales and related.....	10.5	11.4	*	18.59	14.15	*	-24

Table A. Occupational employment and wages by major occupational group, United States and the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, and measures of statistical significance, May 2014 - Continued

Major occupational group	Percent of total employment			Mean hourly wage			
	United States	El Paso		United States	El Paso		Percent difference ⁽¹⁾
Office and administrative support.....	16.0	18.3	*	17.08	13.77	*	-19
Farming, fishing, and forestry.....	0.3	0.1	*	12.09	9.48	*	-22
Construction and extraction.....	3.9	3.6	*	22.40	15.94	*	-29
Installation, maintenance, and repair.....	3.9	4.0	*	21.74	16.93	*	-22
Production.....	6.6	5.7	*	17.06	13.54	*	-21
Transportation and material moving.....	6.8	7.1	*	16.57	13.42	*	-19

⁽¹⁾ A positive percent difference measures how much the mean wage in El Paso is above the national mean wage, while a negative difference reflects a lower wage.

Note: * The percent share of employment or mean hourly wage for this area is significantly different from the national average of all areas at the 90-percent confidence level.

One occupational group – office and administrative support – was chosen to illustrate the diversity of data available for any of the 22 major occupational categories. El Paso had 51,920 jobs in office and administrative support, accounting for 18.3 percent of local employment, significantly higher than the 16.0-percent national share. However, the local wage for this occupational group was significantly below the U.S. average. At \$13.77 an hour, the mean wage for El Paso office and administrative support workers was about 19 percent below the \$17.08 national average.

With employment of 9,990, general office clerks was one of the largest occupations within the office and administrative support group, as were customer service representatives (7,130) and secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive (5,010). Among the higher paying jobs were first-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers, and executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants, with mean hourly wages of \$23.55 and \$22.65, respectively. At the lower end of the wage scale were data entry keyers (\$9.94) and receptionists and information clerks (\$10.04). (Detailed occupational data for office and administrative support are presented in [table 1](#); for a complete listing of detailed occupations go to www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21340.htm.)

Location quotients allow us to explore the occupational make-up of a metropolitan area by comparing the composition of jobs in an area relative to the national average. (See [table 1](#).) For example, a location quotient of 2.0 indicates that an occupation accounts for twice the share of employment in the area than it does nationally. In the El Paso metropolitan area, above average concentrations of employment were found in some of the occupations within the office and administrative support group. For instance, data entry keyers were employed at 2.8 times the national average in El Paso, and couriers and messengers, at 2.5 times the national rate. On the other hand, billing and posting clerks had a location quotient of 1.1 in El Paso, indicating that this particular occupation's local and national employment shares were similar.

These statistics are from the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey, a federal-state cooperative program between BLS and State Workforce Agencies, in this case, the Texas Workforce Commission.

Note

A value that is statistically different from another does not necessarily mean that the difference has economic or practical significance. Statistical significance is concerned with the ability to make confident statements about a universe based on a sample. It is entirely possible that a large difference between two values is not significantly different statistically, while a small difference is, since both the size and heterogeneity of the sample affect the relative error of the data being tested.

Technical Note

The Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey is a semiannual mail survey measuring occupational employment and wage rates for wage and salary workers in nonfarm establishments in the United States. Guam, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands are also surveyed, but their data are not included in the national estimates. OES estimates are constructed from a sample of about 1.2 million establishments. Forms are mailed to approximately 200,000 sampled establishments in May and November each year. May 2014 estimates are based on responses from six semiannual panels collected over a 3-year period: May 2014, November 2013, May 2013, November 2012, May 2012, and November 2011. The overall national response rate for the six panels is 74.3 percent based on establishments and 70.5 percent based on weighted sampled employment. The unweighted employment of sampled establishments across all six semiannual panels represents approximately 57.1 percent of total national employment. (Response rates are slightly lower for these estimates due to the federal shutdown in October 2013.) The sample in the El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area included 2,491 establishments with a response rate of 60 percent. For more information about OES concepts and methodology, go to www.bls.gov/news.release/ocwage.tn.htm.

The OES survey provides estimates of employment and hourly and annual wages for wage and salary workers in 22 major occupational groups and 821 detailed occupations for the nation, states, metropolitan statistical areas, metropolitan divisions, and nonmetropolitan areas. In addition, employment and wage estimates for 94 minor groups and 458 broad occupations are available in the national data. OES data by state and metropolitan/nonmetropolitan area are available from www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcst.htm and www.bls.gov/oes/current/oessrcma.htm, respectively.

The May 2014 OES estimates are based on the 2010 Standard Occupational Classification (SOC) system and the 2012 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). Information about the 2010 SOC is available on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/soc and information about the 2012 NAICS is available at www.bls.gov/bls/naics.htm.

Area definitions The substate area data published in this release reflect the standards and definitions established by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget.

The **El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA)** includes El Paso County in Texas.

Additional information OES data are available on our regional web page at www.bls.gov/regions/southwest. Answers to frequently asked questions about the OES data are available at www.bls.gov/oes/oes_ques.htm. Detailed technical information about the OES survey is available in our Survey Methods and Reliability Statement on the BLS website at www.bls.gov/oes/current/methods_statement.pdf.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: 202-691-5200; Federal Relay Service: 800-877-8339.

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support occupations.....	51,920	1.1	\$13.77	\$28,640
First-line supervisors of office and administrative support workers.....	2,870	1.0	23.55	48,980
Switchboard operators, including answering service.....	250	1.1	10.38	21,590
Bill and account collectors.....	530	0.7	16.22	33,740
Billing and posting clerks.....	1,140	1.1	12.92	26,880
Bookkeeping, accounting, and auditing clerks.....	2,770	0.8	15.25	31,720
Payroll and timekeeping clerks.....	550	1.6	16.65	34,630
Procurement clerks.....	220	1.5	17.59	36,590
Tellers.....	1,280	1.2	11.05	22,970
Court, municipal, and license clerks.....	400	1.5	13.39	27,850
Credit authorizers, checkers, and clerks.....	90	0.9	15.52	32,280
Customer service representatives.....	7,130	1.4	12.67	26,360
File clerks.....	340	1.1	10.78	22,430
Hotel, motel, and resort desk clerks.....	400	0.8	8.62	17,930
Interviewers, except eligibility and loan.....	370	0.9	13.08	27,200
Library assistants, clerical.....	210	1.0	11.03	22,940
Loan interviewers and clerks.....	⁽⁵⁾	⁽⁵⁾	21.83	45,420
New accounts clerks.....	130	1.2	12.71	26,440
Order clerks.....	420	1.1	12.42	25,830
Human resources assistants, except payroll and timekeeping.....	410	1.5	15.19	31,590
Receptionists and information clerks.....	1,220	0.6	10.04	20,870
Reservation and transportation ticket agents and travel clerks.....	150	0.5	19.27	40,080
Information and record clerks, all other.....	580	1.6	16.56	34,440
Cargo and freight agents.....	240	1.5	16.87	35,100
Couriers and messengers.....	370	2.5	9.28	19,290
Police, fire, and ambulance dispatchers.....	190	0.9	16.54	34,400
Dispatchers, except police, fire, and ambulance.....	390	1.0	14.97	31,130
Postal service clerks.....	80	0.6	24.87	51,740
Postal service mail carriers.....	490	0.8	24.27	50,490
Postal service mail sorters, processors, and processing machine operators.....	160	0.6	23.93	49,770
Production, planning, and expediting clerks.....	590	0.9	18.98	39,480
Shipping, receiving, and traffic clerks.....	1,960	1.4	11.36	23,620
Stock clerks and order fillers.....	4,360	1.1	10.13	21,070
Weighers, measurers, checkers, and samplers, recordkeeping.....	190	1.3	12.56	26,120
Executive secretaries and executive administrative assistants.....	790	0.5	22.65	47,120
Legal secretaries.....	280	0.6	17.84	37,110
Medical secretaries.....	1,670	1.5	12.07	25,100
Secretaries and administrative assistants, except legal, medical, and executive.....	5,010	1.1	13.05	27,140
Computer operators.....	220	1.8	13.48	28,040
Data entry keyers.....	1,230	2.8	9.94	20,670
Word processors and typists.....	70	0.4	16.92	35,190
Insurance claims and policy processing clerks.....	390	0.7	17.49	36,370
Mail clerks and mail machine operators, except postal service.....	290	1.4	13.11	27,270
Office clerks, general.....	9,990	1.6	12.73	26,480
Office machine operators, except computer.....	130	0.9	11.58	24,080

Table 1. Employment and wage data from the Occupational Employment Statistics survey, by occupation, El Paso Metropolitan Statistical Area, May 2014 - Continued

Occupation ⁽¹⁾	Employment		Mean wages	
	Level ⁽²⁾	Location quotient ⁽³⁾	Hourly	Annual ⁽⁴⁾
Office and administrative support workers, all other.....	120	0.3	16.80	34,930

⁽¹⁾ For a complete listing of all detailed occupations in the El Paso MSA, see www.bls.gov/oes/current/oes_21340.htm.

⁽²⁾ Estimates for detailed occupations do not sum to the totals because the totals include occupations not shown separately. Estimates do not include self-employed workers.

⁽³⁾ The location quotient is the ratio of the area concentration of occupational employment to the national average concentration. A location quotient greater than one indicates the occupation has a higher share of employment than average, and a location quotient less than one indicates the occupation is less prevalent in the area than average.

⁽⁴⁾ Annual wages have been calculated by multiplying the hourly mean wage by a 'year-round, full-time' hours figure of 2,080 hours; for those occupations where there is not an hourly mean wage published, the annual wage has been directly calculated from the reported survey data.

⁽⁵⁾ Estimates not released.